

LORD OF THE RINGS™

ADVENTURE GAME

The GUIDELINES

Angus McBride '97

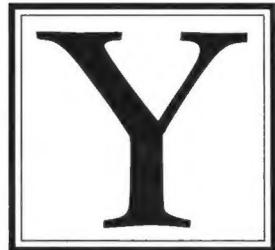
MIDDLE EARTH™

LORD of the RINGSTM

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THE GUIDELINES

1·A FEW BASICS	2
Why Guidelines?	2
Guidelines vs. Rules	3
Rolling the Dice	3
2·MANUEVERS & ACTIVITIES	4
Fixed Chance Maneuvers	4
GM Moderated Maneuvers	5
Typical Maneuvers	5
Taking Damage	5
Healing	5
3·CREATING A CHARACTER	6
Choosing a Character Type	6
Stats	6
Assigned Skill Bonuses	7
Total Bonuses	7
Equipment	9
Spells	9
Spell Description	10
4·CHARACTER RECORDS	11
Hobbit Scout	12
Elf Scout	12
Human Warrior	12
Dwarf Warrior	13
Elf Warrior	13
Human Ranger	13
Half-elf Ranger	14
Human Bard	14
Elf Bard	14
5·COMBAT	15
The Combat Actions	15
The Sequence of Actions	16
Attacks	17
Combat Table	17
6·COMBAT FACTORS	19
Representing the Physical Situation	19
Facing	20
Conflicting Actions	20
Orientation	20
Basic Perception	20
Character Communication	20
7·GAMEMASTER GUIDELINES	21
Keeping Track of Time	21
Experience Points	21
Food and Water	22
8·ACTION SEQUENCES	23
Sneaking through Town by Night	24
Getting into Position	24
Breaking and Entering	25
Retreating from a Site	25
Fleeing an Enemy	25
Combat	25
Sneaking through Countryside	27
Scouting the Unknown	27
Ambushing an Enemy	28
Escaping from Capture	29
Picking a Pocket	29
Tracking through Wilderness	30
Following Quarry	31
Making a Distraction	31
9·“THE LAST WORD”	32



You want to what?!" Barnabas stared in astonishment at Jennifer, who was role playing the Half-elf Rilwen.

"I want to climb up into this willow tree, conceal myself behind the curtain of its foliage, and hum the way an Ent or a Huorn might.

Barney, you know it's perfectly reasonable. And I think that it's highly likely that a couple of suspicious, black-hearted Men might be a little worried by a humming tree. They might think the wood is haunted and run away." Jennifer paused, sipped some gingerale, and peered at the GM over the rim of the glass.

Barnabas sighed. "Okay, you can try it. Climbing the tree is Very Easy, since it has some very low first branches. And climbing uses your General skill. So, it's a General-five maneuver. Roll the dice!"

• ONE • A FEW BASICS

Looks like you're an eager beaver, ready to read the rules (oops! guidelines) that made the adventure "DAWN COMES EARLY" so much fun.

What?! You haven't played the adventure yet! Well, I take my hat off to you. Your conscientious approach is sure to make you one of the fairest GMs around. Just don't forget to relax and have fun once you start playing. Make snarling noises and thrash your arms a bit when you role play those nasty Trolls.

What's that? Oh, I've got it wrong — you *have* played the adventure. Fun, huh? Did you hop up from the table and make jabbing motions in the air when Lawrie flourished his wicked knife? It's one of the best parts! But you're curious about specifics behind some of those guidelines, right?

Read on! These guidelines are some of the shortest and snappiest you'll find among the assortment of role playing games available. And you'll be ready to tackle just about any FRP (fantasy role playing) challenge that comes your way when you've finished the last page!

WHY GUIDELINES?

Most fantasy role playing games need rules or guidelines to define and control the physical realities of the world in which adventures take place.

When Gláin the Dwarf tries to cleave the skull of a coiled rattlesnake, does he succeed? If Tatharína the Bard smoothes a salve of Amberseal on Tolman's wounded arm, how fast do the cuts heal? When Lily the Hobbit hides behind a gorse bush to watch some nesting robins, can Gallind the Elf find her?

A set of guidelines ensures consistent answers to these questions and others like them. Ideally, such guidelines handle most situations that arise in a FRP game — without detracting from the flavor and detail of the plot or setting of the game. In *Lord of the Rings Adventure Game™ (LOR)*, the guidelines are specially designed for the physical realities of people, places, and things in Tolkien's Middle-earth.



SECTION TWO explains how to resolve commonly occurring *maneuvers* and *activities* that characters attempt during their adventures.

SECTION THREE explains how each player may create his or her own character to play, rather than using a pre-generated character.

SECTION FOUR provides nine Character Records to choose from when creating a character.

SECTION FIVE explains how to handle a combat situation (i.e., fighting).

SECTION SIX presents some of the details that add more realism to a combat.

SECTION SEVEN provides special hints for the Gamemaster; only the GM should read this.

SECTION EIGHT is a collection of *action sequences* that are likely to occur in most FRP games.

SECTION NINE contains a few last words about role playing and the sequel adventures available for *LOR*.

GUIDELINES VS. RULES

The Gamemaster and players should keep in mind that these guidelines are just that: guidelines. They are intended to aid in the creation and running of a fantasy role playing game. The GM should feel free to modify them to fit his or her own views or style of role playing. The players must realize that the GM is the final authority when it comes to guideline interpretations or changes.

On the other hand, these guidelines and the Gamemaster's decisions concerning them are the only guide that the players have to their characters' capabilities within the Middle-earth setting. So the Gamemaster must be consistent and even-handed in his or her decisions, or the players will lose the trust and confidence that are necessary for a truly enjoyable and satisfying role playing game.

ROLLING THE DICE

We talked about rolling the dice way back in the introduction to the adventure "DAWN COMES EARLY," but you probably read that yesterday or even last week. So, here's a quick review.

LOR has a pair of dice included among its components. Many times during your adventures you will roll the dice to obtain a number between 2 and 12. The resulting dice roll is often referred to in the text as "2D6" (an abbreviation for rolling 2 Dice, 6-sided).

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ily's in pretty bad shape," said Barnabas. "Her face is a pasty white — like biscuit dough — and she's up to 57 points of damage."

"Why, oh, why did I ever get her involved with this whole escapade?" muttered Stuart in the role of Tolman. "I'm the Finder. It was my job to handle these Trolls. Tatharína, can't you do anything?"

"I'm out of herbs, and if I cast another Healing spell I'll be unconscious," answered Diana. She opened her lips to say more, but the Game-master interrupted.

"You hear the clopping of hooves in the distance. There's a horse and rider approaching on the Greenway. The rider is grey-cloaked, and his long, white beard nearly covers his silver scarf. He wears big, black boots, and . . ."

"It's Gandalf!" shouted Michael. It's got to be the Wizard! Gláin calls a greeting."

• TWO • MANEUVERS AND ACTIVITIES

While role playing, characters will attempt to perform certain actions. We call them *maneuvers* and *activities*. *Maneuvers* have a chance of success that is dependent upon the characters' bonuses (see SECTION THREE). Picking a rich merchant's pocket is one example of a *maneuver*. *Activities* may normally be automatically accomplished, given the right circumstances and enough time. Setting up camp in the wilderness, if you have the proper gear, is one example of an *activity*.

FIXED CHANCE MANEUVERS

Certain *maneuvers* in published *LOR* adventures will be given a fixed chance of success in the form of a stat name followed by a number:

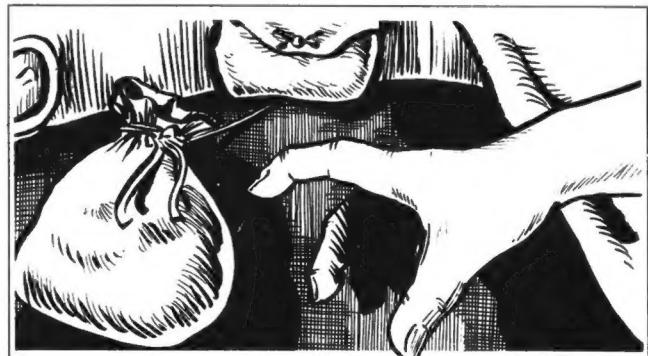
statΔnumber (e.g., *GeneralΔ9*)

To determine the result of such a *maneuver*, roll the dice and add the stat bonus indicated (see SECTION THREE); this is the *net roll*.

- If *net roll* \geq *number*, the *maneuver* succeeds;
- Otherwise, the *maneuver* fails.

EXAMPLE

Tatharína is attempting to determine if there is an archer crouching behind the battlement of a ruined tower in the Lone Lands east of Bree. The *maneuver* is a *PerceptionΔ8* *maneuver*. It will fail if the *dice roll* plus her *Perception* bonus is less than 8 and will succeed if the *dice roll* plus her *Perception Bonus* is 8 or more.



GM MODERATED MANEUVERS

Sometimes a character may want to attempt a *maneuver* that is not specifically given a success chance by the adventure. The GM may decide **not** to allow the character to attempt the *maneuver*. Or the GM may assign which stat bonus to use and a *chance of success*. Suggested chances of success for various difficulties are indicated below:

Routine	Δ4
Very Easy	Δ5
Easy	Δ6
Light	Δ7
Medium	Δ8
Hard	Δ9
Very Hard	Δ11
Extremely Hard	Δ13
Sheer Folly	Δ15
Absurd	Δ18

After the GM assigns a chance of success, the character may decide not to attempt the *maneuver*.

TYPICAL MANEUVERS

This section provides a list of some commonly occurring *maneuvers* and some suggested chances of success (i.e., "Difficulties") along with the stat bonus to be used. You can use this list as a guide for determining the difficulty of other similar, but unlisted, *maneuvers*.

climbing a tree	General Δ7
climbing the rough, brick wall of a cottage	General Δ8
climbing the smooth wall of a fortress	General Δ15
climbing a rough, stone wall in the rain	General Δ11
leaping an 8' ditch	General Δ8
jumping a 4' fence	General Δ7
crossing a stream on stepping stones	General Δ6
spotting a foe crossing a field by day	Perception Δ4
spotting a concealed enemy by night	Perception Δ13
breaking down a locked door	Strength Δ9
breaking a steel sword over one's knee	Strength Δ15
swatting a mosquito	Agility Δ9
catching a spilled mug	Agility Δ6
answering one of Gollum's riddles	Intelligence Δ11
hiding behind a barrel in a cellar	Subterfuge Δ5
hiding behind a bush in broad daylight	Subterfuge Δ13
sensing evil in a Ringwraith's presence	Magical Δ7
sensing evil in an ordinary bandit's presence	Magical Δ13
sensing the magic in an enchanted sword	Magical Δ15

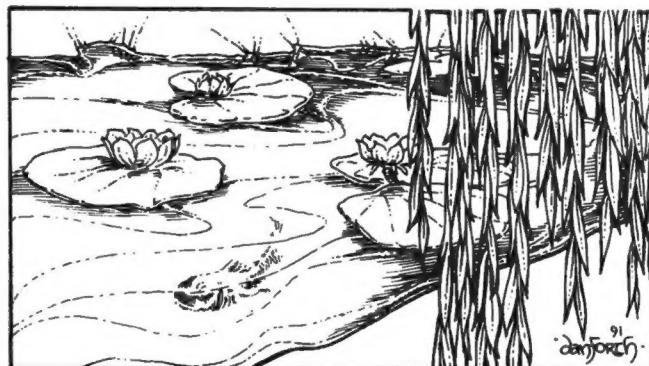
EXAMPLE

Tolman the Hobbit wants to climb a tree in order to look around the area. No chance of success is specifically given, so the GM decides that the difficulty is Light (Δ7) and the stat bonus to use is *General*. Thus, the Hobbit will fail if the *dice roll* plus his *General* bonus is less than 7, and he will succeed if the *dice roll* plus his *General* bonus is 7 or more.

TAKING DAMAGE

As characters adventure in Middle-earth, they may be hurt and take damage from fights, traps, falls, etc. Each player must keep track of this damage in terms of a total amount of *Damage Taken*. The total should be recorded in the *Damage Taken* space on the character's Character Record. Only *Damage Taken* totals change during play; a PC's *Endurance* does **not** change.

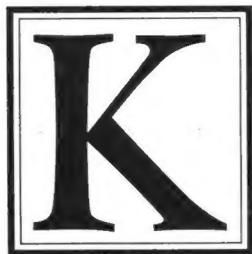
If a character's *Damage Taken* exceeds his or her *Endurance*, the character is unconscious. A character may also become unconscious due to an "U" result from an attack. He or she will remain unconscious until *Damage Taken* is reduced so that it is less than or equal to *Endurance* (see **HEALING** below).



HEALING

Normally, a character may reduce his or her *Damage Taken* by 1 every three hours if not resting or by 1 each hour if resting (or unconscious).

A PC who took an attack resulting in a U will have received a blow that increased the character's *Damage Taken* to equal his or her *Endurance* plus the *dice roll* that knocked the PC out. If no healing herbs or spells are available, it could be as many as 12 long hours before the character regains consciousness!



ate couldn't make it tonight. She's got to chair a meeting, but she said you could play her character Lily, if you'd like," explained Stefan. "You did say you'd done some fantasy role playing before, didn't you?"

"Just once," answered Jean. "Back in my college days. And it was a lot of fun. But I'm not sure I want to play a Hobbit Scout. Scout, yes; but Hobbit — no. I want to be an Elf for the evening!"

"Not a problem." Barnabas pulled the guidelines booklet out of his *LOR* box. "We can create an Elf Scout for you in less than ten minutes. What would you like to name her?"

• THREE • CREATING A CHARACTER

To create your own character, just follow the directions given in this section. As you go through this character creation process, refer to the Character Records found on pages 12-14.

CHOOSING A CHARACTER TYPE

In order to create your character, you must first choose the type of character you want to play. There are 9 character types provided in *LOR*:

- Hobbit Scout(like Bilbo or Frodo)
- Elf Scout(like Legolas)
- Human Warrior(like Éowyn or Boromir)
- Dwarf Warrior(like Gimli or Thorin)
- Elf Warrior(like Glorfindel)
- Human Ranger(like Aragorn)
- Half-elf Ranger(like Elrond)
- Human Bard(like Gandalf)
- Elf Bard(like Galadriel or Arwen)

All characters can perform any *maneuver* allowed in the game, but each character type is best at performing certain types of maneuvers.

- A **Warrior** is very skilled in combat.
- A **Scout** excels at performing *maneuvers* involving subterfuge.
- A **Ranger** has good outdoors skills.
- A **Bard** is skilled in magic.

Keep track of your character on the Character Record for the character type that you choose. It is best to enter information in pencil so that it can be erased and updated. If necessary, you may copy or photocopy this Character Record for your own use. If you do not have access to a photocopier, just use a blank piece of paper and copy the information from the Character Record onto it.

STATS

Your character has 12 physical/mental capabilities and skills called *stats* (short for statistics). Eleven of these twelve stats are *bonuses* that affect your chances of accomplishing certain *maneuvers* during your character's adventures. The twelfth reflects how much damage your character can absorb before passing out.

- 1) **Strength:** This stat reflects how strong your character is. Strong characters might break down barred doors or snap fire wood over one knee.
- 2) **Agility:** This stat measures how nimble and agile your character is. Stitching a wound or balancing atop a parapet are easier tasks for an agile character.

- 3) Intelligence:** This stat determines the mental capabilities of your character. Intelligent characters will answer riddles more readily and remember detailed information better.
- 4) Movement:** This stat indicates how far and fast a character can move. The higher the stat, the more likely you'll win a foot race.
- 5) Defense (DB):** This stat reflects your character's ability to avoid attacks. DB is often used in the text as an abbreviation for *Defense bonus*.
- 6) Melee OB (Skill):** This stat determines your character's ability to attack in melee (hand-to-hand) combat. OB stands for *Offensive bonus*.
- 7) Missile OB (Skill):** This stat measures your character's ability to attack using a missile such as a thrown spear or a bow and arrow.
- 8) General (Skill):** Your character will use this stat when directed to perform general activities by the adventure text, including: Climb, Track, Hunt, Ride, and Swim maneuvers.
- 9) Subterfuge (Skill):** Your character will use this stat when trying to move without being seen or heard (i.e., sneaking), trying to steal or take something held or protected by an opponent, picking a lock, escaping from bonds, and other similar activities.
- 10) Perception (Skill):** This stat determines how much information your character gathers through observation and exploration. It also measures his or her ability to talk and negotiate with beings met during adventures.
- 11) Magical (Skill):** This stat reflects your character's affinity with magic and spells. You'll use this stat when you try to cast a spell and when indicated by the text.
- 12) Endurance:** This stat indicates how much damage your character can take before losing consciousness.



ASSIGNED SKILL BONUSES

When you start creating your character, you have six *+1 bonuses* to assign to your *skill bonuses* (stats 6-11 above); the choice is yours (see below). Each *+1 bonus* assigned to a skill bonus will increase that skill bonus by one.

- You may assign more than one *+1 bonus* to a given skill, but no more than three to any one skill. Two *+1 bonuses* assigned to a skill will increase the initial skill bonus by *+2*, and three *+1 bonuses* will increase the initial skill bonus by *+3*. No more than three *+1 bonuses* may be assigned to any one skill.
- These bonuses should be recorded in the appropriate spaces in the *Skill bonus* column on your Character Record.
- If you do not assign any *+1 bonuses* to a skill, record a *-2 bonus* in the appropriate *Skill bonus* space.
- If your *Magical bonus* is *+1* or more, you may learn spells. For every *+1 bonus* that you do not assign to a skill bonus, you may learn two spells that you may cast during play. The spells are described in the section on SPELLS.

TOTAL BONUSES

At this point, you should have a bonus recorded in the *Skill bonus* space for each skill stat; keep in mind that these "bonuses" can be negative as well as positive. For each stat, add:

the Stat bonus + the Skill bonus + any Special bonus

Record the total in the appropriate *Total bonus* space.

When you are required to *add your bonus* during the game, you should add your *Total bonus* for the appropriate stat.

During play, you may acquire or lose equipment or abilities that may affect your bonuses. The *Special bonus* space is used to record these bonuses; of course, some of the *Total bonuses* will have to be recalculated when this occurs.

EXAMPLE

Let's go through the character development process using a Human Ranger like Aragorn. The standard Character Record (for Human Rangers) provides the character's *Stat bonuses*, *Equipment bonuses* (in the *Special bonus* column), and a list of equipment.

All we have to do is pick a name, assign the six *+1 bonuses*, and think a little about the appearance and personality of the character. Let's call this character Galfaroth.

We could assign one *+1 bonus* to each skill and thus avoid the *-2 bonus* assigned to skills that have no *+1 bonus* assigned to them. However, such a character would not excel at any one skill. So let's not assign a *+1 bonus* to *Magical Skill* or to *Subterfuge Skill*, and instead assign two *+1 bonuses* to *Melee OB Skill* and two to *General Skill*. This will mean that

Galfaroth is tough in melee and very good in the outdoors, but not very sneaky or magically inclined.

The next step is to obtain a total for each stat: add the *Stat bonus*, any *Skill bonus*, and any *Special bonus*. The results are the *Total bonuses* listed on Galfaroth's Character Record below.

The final step is to note down a description of the character (provided in the example Character Record above) along with an outline of significant events that occurred before the start of the adventure he's about to begin. The appearance and personality of your character are up to you — that's the fun of role playing! Usually the GM creates all or most of a character's life history (similar to the stories of Tolman and Company provided in the character fold-outs).

Name: <i>Galfaroth</i>			CHARACTER RECORD Human Ranger			Damage Taken:	Experience Points:
<hr/> <hr/> BONUSES <hr/> <hr/>							
STAT	Skill	+ Stat	+ Special	=	Total	STAT	
Strength	NA	+ I	+ _____	=	(1)	Strength	
Agility	NA	+ 0	+ _____	=	(0)	Agility	
Intelligence	NA	+ I	+ _____	=	(1)	Intelligence	
Movement	NA	+ 0	+ _____ -I (Leather Armor)	=	(-1)	Movement	
Defense	NA	+ I	+ _____ +I (Leather Armor)	=	(2)	Defense	
Melee OB	2	+ I	+ _____ -I (2H Sword, +3 damage)	=	(2)	Melee OB	
Missile OB	1	+ -I	+ _____ -I (Spear)	=	(-1)	Missile OB	
General	2	+ 2	+ _____	=	(4)	General	
Subterfuge	-2	+ 0	+ _____ -I (Leather Armor)	=	(-3)	Subterfuge	
Perception	1	+ I	+ _____	=	(2)	Perception	
Magical	-2	+ 0	+ _____	=	(-2)	Magical	
Endurance	NA	+ 40	+ _____	=	(40)	Endurance	

Equipment: Two-handed Sword (2H Sword), Spear, Leather Armor, backpack, belt & pouch, 3 days food & water

Notes: Galfaroth is a Ranger of the North, one of the followers of Aragorn II in the years before he claimed the throne in the Hall of Kings to rule the reunited kingdoms of Gondor and Arnor. Galfaroth wanders the wild lands that were fiefs of Arthedain in days of old. The safety of the few folk remaining in the North — the Hobbits of the Shire, the isolated villages such as Bree and Rood — are his special charge. Galfaroth wears the grey cloak and silver brooch (shaped like a six-pointed star) signifying a Ranger's allegiance to his Chieftain.

EQUIPMENT

Whenever you acquire money and equipment, record them on your Character Record in the spaces provided. Silver pieces are "money" and may be used during your adventures to pay for food, lodging, transport, bribes, etc. Certain equipment may affect your stat bonuses.

You may only wear: 1 suit of armor, 1 dagger (on belt), 1 cloak, 1 backpack, and 1 belt and pouch.

In addition, you may carry a number of pieces of equipment equal to: six plus your *Strength bonus* multiplied by three. Expressed another way: $6 + (3 \times \text{Strength bonus})$. This total may include a maximum of 3 weapons. If you lose your backpack, this number is reduced by half (round down), and you lose any excess equipment along with the backpack.

During your adventures, certain special items may be obtained that do not follow these restrictions.

- **Armor** has the following effects on your skill bonuses:

Plate Armor: +3 to *Defense bonus*; -3 to *Subterfuge, Movement, and Magical bonuses*.

Chain Armor: +2 to *Defense bonus*; -2 to *Subterfuge, Movement, and Magical bonuses*.

Leather Armor: +1 to *Defense bonus*; -1 to *Subterfuge and Movement bonuses*.

Shield: +1 to *Defense bonus*; -1 to *Magical bonus*.

- A shield may not be used in combination with the following weapons: bow, battle-axe, quarter-staff, or two-hand sword.

- **Weapons:** If you damage an opponent, your weapon can provide additional damage (this damage applies to each attack only when a damage result of 1 or more is obtained):

Sword +1

Mace +2 (only if opponent is wearing chain or plate armor)

Spear +0

Dagger -1

Warhammer +2 (but -1 to *Melee OB*)

Battle-axe +2

Quarterstaff +1

Two-hand Sword +3 (but -1 to *Melee OB*)

Bare-handed -3 (and -2 to *Melee OB*)

EXAMPLE

Using the *Combat Table*, you inflict 8 points of damage on your opponent. If you are using a sword (+1 to damage), your opponent actually takes 9 damage points (8 + 1). If you are using a Dagger (-1 to damage), he or she would take 7 damage points (8 - 1).

- **Thrown Weapons:** The following weapons may be used once in a given combat as a missile attack against a target within 50' (*Missile OB* modifications are given in parentheses): spear(-1), dagger(-1), warhammer(-2), sword(-3), mace(-3). In such a case, the weapon may not be used in melee and may only be recovered by taking a round of *action*.
- **Bows and Slings** may only be used to make missile attacks.

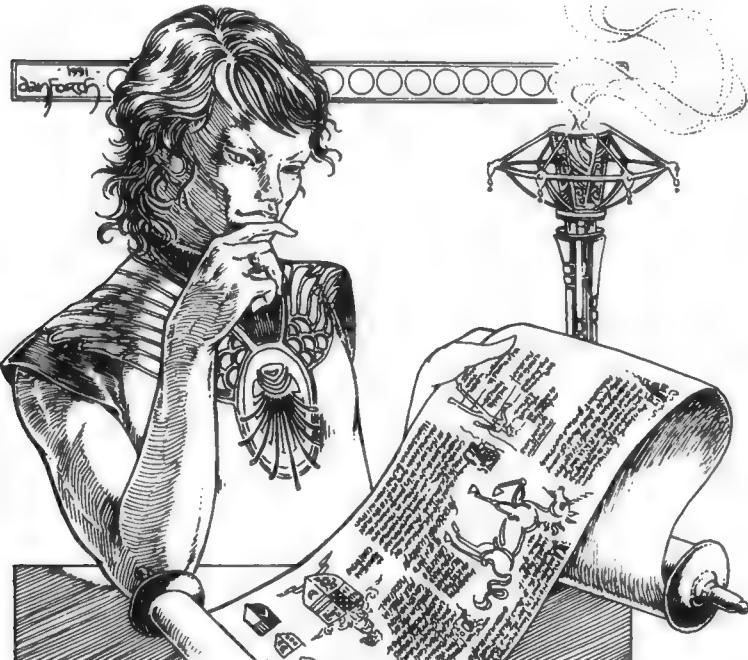
SPELLS

For every +1 bonus that you did not assign to a skill during the character development process, you may learn two of the spells described below. Once a spell is learned, your character knows it and is able to cast it within the restrictions given below. Record any spells learned on your Character Record.

- You must have learned a spell in order to cast it.
- If you want to cast a spell, roll the dice and add your *Magical bonus*. If the result is 7 or greater, you successfully cast the spell. (Refer to the spell description for the effects.) Otherwise, the spell has no effect.
- Each time you successfully cast a spell, your *Damage Taken* is increased by the number given in parentheses in the spell description. This reflects the strain of casting spells.
- If involved in a fight, you may only attempt to cast a spell when a missile would normally be fired. Spells are impossible to cast when engaged in melee (exception: *Speed*).
- Most of the spells (except *Luck*) may be cast on either the castor or on another character. Except where the description says otherwise, the castor must touch the other character.

SPELL DESCRIPTIONS

- 1) Strength (5):** When cast on a character, this spell doubles the damage given with melee attacks for the next three rounds.
- 2) Shield (4):** When cast on a character, this spell will increase his or her *DB* by +2 for the next five rounds. This spell may not be cast if the character affected will be using a normal shield during the combat.



- 3) Speed (4):** The character that this spell is cast on may perform two actions a round for the next two rounds.
- 4) Balance (3):** Increases a character's *Agility bonus* by +2 for the next 5 minutes.
- 5) Camouflage (3):** Increases a character's *Subterfuge bonus* by +2 for the next 5 minutes.
- 6) Concentration (3):** Increases a character's *Perception bonus* by +2 for the next 5 minutes.
- 7) Item Analysis (3):** You may cast this spell and analyze an item to determine if it has special abilities or bonuses. *Castor must touch the item.*
- 8) Clairvoyance (5):** When given two or more choices (e.g., a fork in the road, which of multiple doors to open, etc.), the GM will give you a general idea of what will most likely happen when you make one of the choices.

9) Healing (4): This spell increases the number of hits that a character may heal while resting. The character will heal 1 damage point every 5 minutes instead of 1 point every hour as long as he or she continuously rests. The spell can also be used to reduce a character's *Damage Taken* by 4 immediately.

10) Luck (5): When you cast this spell just after you have *rolled the dice*, you may ignore the number rolled and *roll the dice* again. This spell may not cast more than once per required *roll of the dice*. *This spell may not be cast on another character.*

11) Protection from Magic (4): When an opponent casts a spell, you may cast this spell. The *dice roll* used to resolve his or her spell will be decreased by your *Magical bonus*. *Castor need not touch the opponent, but must be able to see him or her.*

12) Sustenance (2): When cast on a character, this spell has the same effect as eating a day's requirement of food and drinking a day's requirement of water.

13) Calm (4): May only be cast against one animal or normal being (Man, Elf, Dwarf, Hobbit, Orc, Troll, etc.). *Roll the dice* and add your *Magical bonus*. If the result is 9 or more, the foe is *calmed*, and will not attack unless attacked by someone else. *Castor need not touch the target, but must be able to see the foe.*

14) Charm Animal (5): You may cast this spell against any hostile normal animal (bear, wolf, snake, etc.). The animal will follow you (record its *OB*, *DB*, and *Endurance*) and will fight any foe you desire it to. After it has been involved in one fight for you, the animal will leave. You may only have one animal *charmed* at a time. *Castor need not touch the animal, but must be able to see it.*

15) Fire Bolt (6): This spell may be used during combat against any target within 100'. *Roll the dice* and add double your *Magical bonus*; the result is the amount of *Damage Taken* by one opponent of your choice. *Castor need not touch the target.*

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tuart, it's been many minutes," said Jean, with a grin.

"Are you kidding?!" exclaimed Stuart. "Just because you use minutes in those equations of yours doesn't mean I talk about weeks that way! Has the snake hatched yet?"

Jean ran her fingers through her short, red hair. "Not for a few days yet. If it holds off until Saturday, you can come into the lab if you'd like to see it."

"Whoa! If I'd like?! I'm there!"

Stefan interrupted what promised to be a lengthy discussion on herpetology. "Stuart's better at the **LOR** character generation than any of us, except Barney. Why don't the two of you work on creating the Elf Scout of your dreams, Jean?"

Her eyes twinkled. "In other words: get off the snake stuff, or we'll never start playing. Good enough. Stuart, what do I do first?"

"You need a blank Character Record first of all. I've got some here. And we need the one designed for an Elf Scout." He thumbed through the stack of papers, pulling one sheet out from the middle. "Okay. In **LOR**, the characters all have twelve stats that determine their capabilities. Six of them are fixed by your choice of race and profession. The other six vary, depending on how you allot the six plus-one bonuses that everyone gets at the start. What's your name going to be? Should we dig up a glossary of Elvish terms?"

"Actually, I had something pop to mind as soon as Stefan mentioned fantasy role playing on the phone. Sûlhiril. It means Wind Woman. I want her to be able to move as softly as the air."

Stuart wrote the name in the proper blank on the Character Record. "If you want Sûlhiril to sneak well, you'd better assign three plus-one's to her Subterfuge. That's the most you can allot at one time to any one stat. But you'll be weaker in another area to compensate. Sure you want to do it?"

"I think so. What's the Magical bonus good for. Casting spells?"

Stuart nodded.

"I'll take a -2 in that, and in Melee OB, and in General."

"Hmmm. You've got three more bonuses to assign," prompted Stuart, pencil scribbling, "and two more stats — Perception and Missile OB. How do you want to split it?"

"Plus two to Perception, and plus one to Missiles."

"Okay. Your equipment's on the Character Record; you don't need to pick spells; we're all set. Let's go get Barney, and have him concoct a history for you."

• FOUR •

CHARACTER RECORDS

Name:			CHARACTER RECORD Hobbit Scout			Damage Taken:	Experience Points:
BONUSES							
STAT	Skill	+ Stat	+ Special	=	Total	STAT	
Strength	NA	+ -2	+ _____	=	_____	Strength	
Agility	NA	+ 3	+ _____	=	_____	Agility	
Intelligence	NA	+ 0	+ _____	=	_____	Intelligence	
Movement	NA	+ -2	+ _____	=	_____	Movement	
Defense	NA	+ 3	+ _____	=	_____	Defense	
Melee OB	—	+ -2	+ ____ -I (Dagger, -I damage)	=	_____	Melee OB	
Missile OB	—	+ 2	+ _____ (Sling)	=	_____	Missile OB	
General	—	+ 0	+ _____	=	_____	General	
Subterfuge	—	+ 2	+ _____	=	_____	Subterfuge	
Perception	—	+ 1	+ _____	=	_____	Perception	
Magical	—	+ -3	+ _____	=	_____	Magical	
Endurance	NA	+ 45	+ _____	=	_____	Endurance	

Name:			CHARACTER RECORD Elf Scout			Damage Taken:	Experience Points:
BONUSES							
STAT	Skill	+ Stat	+ Special	=	Total	STAT	
Strength	NA	+ 0	+ _____	=	_____	Strength	
Agility	NA	+ 2	+ _____	=	_____	Agility	
Intelligence	NA	+ 0	+ _____	=	_____	Intelligence	
Movement	NA	+ 2	+ _____	=	_____	Movement	
Defense	NA	+ 2	+ _____	=	_____	Defense	
Melee OB	—	+ -I	+ ____ (Sword, +I damage)	=	_____	Melee OB	
Missile OB	—	+ 0	+ _____ (Bow)	=	_____	Missile OB	
General	—	+ 1	+ _____	=	_____	General	
Subterfuge	—	+ 1	+ _____	=	_____	Subterfuge	
Perception	—	+ 1	+ _____	=	_____	Perception	
Magical	—	+ -2	+ _____	=	_____	Magical	
Endurance	NA	+ 35	+ _____	=	_____	Endurance	

Name:			CHARACTER RECORD Human Warrior			Damage Taken:	Experience Points:
BONUSES							
STAT	Skill	+ Stat	+ Special	=	Total	STAT	
Strength	NA	+ 2	+ _____	=	_____	Strength	
Agility	NA	+ 1	+ _____	=	_____	Agility	
Intelligence	NA	+ 0	+ _____	=	_____	Intelligence	
Movement	NA	+ 0	+ ____ -I (Leather Armor)	=	_____	Movement	
Defense	NA	+ 1	+ ____ +2 (Shield, Leather Armor)	=	_____	Defense	
Melee OB	—	+ 2	+ ____ -I (WHammer, +2 damage)	=	_____	Melee OB	
Missile OB	—	+ 1	+ _____ (Bow)	=	_____	Missile OB	
General	—	+ 0	+ _____	=	_____	General	
Subterfuge	—	+ 0	+ ____ -I (Leather Armor)	=	_____	Subterfuge	
Perception	—	+ 0	+ _____	=	_____	Perception	
Magical	—	+ -2	+ ____ -I (Shield)	=	_____	Magical	
Endurance	NA	+ 50	+ _____	=	_____	Endurance	

Name:			CHARACTER RECORD Dwarf Warrior			Damage Taken:	Experience Points:
BONUSES							
STAT	Skill	+ Stat	+ Special	=	Total	STAT	
Strength	NA	+ 2	+ _____	=	_____	Strength	
Agility	NA	+ -I	+ _____	=	_____	Agility	
Intelligence	NA	+ 0	+ _____	=	_____	Intelligence	
Movement	NA	+ 0	+ _____ -2 (Chain Armor)	=	_____	Movement	
Defense	NA	+ 0	+ _____ +2 (Chain Armor)	=	_____	Defense	
Melee OB	—	+ 2	+ _____ (Battle-axe, +2 damage)	=	_____	Melee OB	
Missile OB	—	+ 0	+ _____ -I (Spear)	=	_____	Missile OB	
General	—	+ I	+ _____	=	_____	General	
Subterfuge	—	+ I	+ _____ -2 (Chain Armor)	=	_____	Subterfuge	
Perception	—	+ 0	+ _____	=	_____	Perception	
Magical	—	+ -3	+ _____ -2 (Chain Armor)	=	_____	Magical	
Endurance	NA	+ 60	+ _____	=	_____	Endurance	

Name:			CHARACTER RECORD Elf Warrior			Damage Taken:	Experience Points:
BONUSES							
STAT	Skill	+ Stat	+ Special	=	Total	STAT	
Strength	NA	+ 0	+ _____	=	_____	Strength	
Agility	NA	+ 2	+ _____	=	_____	Agility	
Intelligence	NA	+ 0	+ _____	=	_____	Intelligence	
Movement	NA	+ I	+ _____	=	_____	Movement	
Defense	NA	+ 2	+ _____ +I (Shield)	=	_____	Defense	
Melee OB	—	+ 0	+ _____ (Sword, +I damage)	=	_____	Melee OB	
Missile OB	—	+ 2	+ _____ (Bow)	=	_____	Missile OB	
General	—	+ 0	+ _____	=	_____	General	
Subterfuge	—	+ I	+ _____	=	_____	Subterfuge	
Perception	—	+ 0	+ _____	=	_____	Perception	
Magical	—	+ -2	+ _____ -I (Shield)	=	_____	Magical	
Endurance	NA	+ 45	+ _____	=	_____	Endurance	

Name:			CHARACTER RECORD Human Ranger			Damage Taken:	Experience Points:
BONUSES							
STAT	Skill	+ Stat	+ Special	=	Total	STAT	
Strength	NA	+ I	+ _____	=	_____	Strength	
Agility	NA	+ 0	+ _____	=	_____	Agility	
Intelligence	NA	+ I	+ _____	=	_____	Intelligence	
Movement	NA	+ 0	+ _____ -I (Leather Armor)	=	_____	Movement	
Defense	NA	+ I	+ _____ +I (Leather Armor)	=	_____	Defense	
Melee OB	—	+ I	+ _____ -I (2H Sword, +3 damage)	=	_____	Melee OB	
Missile OB	—	+ -I	+ _____ -I (Spear)	=	_____	Missile OB	
General	—	+ 2	+ _____	=	_____	General	
Subterfuge	—	+ 0	+ _____ -I (Leather Armor)	=	_____	Subterfuge	
Perception	—	+ I	+ _____	=	_____	Perception	
Magical	—	+ 0	+ _____	=	_____	Magical	
Endurance	NA	+ 40	+ _____	=	_____	Endurance	

Name:			CHARACTER RECORD Half-elf Ranger			Damage Taken:	Experience Points:
BONUSES							
STAT	Skill	+ Stat	+ Special	=	Total	STAT	
Strength	NA	+ 0	+ _____	=	_____	Strength	
Agility	NA	+ 1	+ _____	=	_____	Agility	
Intelligence	NA	+ 1	+ _____	=	_____	Intelligence	
Movement	NA	+ 1	+ _____	=	_____	Movement	
Defense	NA	+ 1	+ _____ +I (Shield)	=	_____	Defense	
Melee OB	—	+ -I	+ _____ (Sword, +I damage)	=	_____	Melee OB	
Missile OB	—	+ I	+ _____ (Bow)	=	_____	Missile OB	
General	—	+ I	+ _____	=	_____	General	
Subterfuge	—	+ 0	+ _____	=	_____	Subterfuge	
Perception	—	+ I	+ _____	=	_____	Perception	
Magical	—	+ 0	+ _____ +I (Shield)	=	_____	Magical	
Endurance	NA	+ 35	+ _____	=	_____	Endurance	

Name:			CHARACTER RECORD Human Bard			Damage Taken:	Experience Points:
BONUSES							
STAT	Skill	+ Stat	+ Special	=	Total	STAT	
Strength	NA	+ 0	+ _____	=	_____	Strength	
Agility	NA	+ 0	+ _____	=	_____	Agility	
Intelligence	NA	+ 2	+ _____	=	_____	Intelligence	
Movement	NA	+ 0	+ _____ -I (Leather Armor)	=	_____	Movement	
Defense	NA	+ 0	+ _____ +I (Leather Armor)	=	_____	Defense	
Melee OB	—	+ 0	+ _____ (Quarterstaff, +I damage)	=	_____	Melee OB	
Missile OB	—	+ -I	+ _____ -I (Dagger, -I damage)	=	_____	Missile OB	
General	—	+ 0	+ _____	=	_____	General	
Subterfuge	—	+ -I	+ _____ -I (Leather Armor)	=	_____	Subterfuge	
Perception	—	+ 2	+ _____	=	_____	Perception	
Magical	—	+ 2	+ _____	=	_____	Magical	
Endurance	NA	+ 35	+ _____	=	_____	Endurance	

Name:			CHARACTER RECORD Elf Bard			Damage Taken:	Experience Points:
BONUSES							
STAT	Skill	+ Stat	+ Special	=	Total	STAT	
Strength	NA	+ -I	+ _____	=	_____	Strength	
Agility	NA	+ 1	+ _____	=	_____	Agility	
Intelligence	NA	+ 2	+ _____	=	_____	Intelligence	
Movement	NA	+ I	+ _____	=	_____	Movement	
Defense	NA	+ 1	+ _____	=	_____	Defense	
Melee OB	—	+ -I	+ _____ (Quarterstaff, +I damage)	=	_____	Melee OB	
Missile OB	—	+ 0	+ _____ (Bow)	=	_____	Missile OB	
General	—	+ 0	+ _____	=	_____	General	
Subterfuge	—	+ -I	+ _____	=	_____	Subterfuge	
Perception	—	+ I	+ _____	=	_____	Perception	
Magical	—	+ 2	+ _____	=	_____	Magical	
Endurance	NA	+ 30	+ _____	=	_____	Endurance	

D

iana! Better get back in here. We're in trouble," yelled Stuart.

"What kind of trouble?" came Diana's voice from the kitchen. The refrigerator door shut, and ice clinked in a glass. "Just let me finish pouring my soda, and I'll be right there." She appeared in the doorway at the end of her sentence. "Well, what is it?"

"Wolf trouble," answered Michael. "They've surrounded our camp."

"Eyes glowing, and fangs bared," added Barney. "You'd best act fast. A wolf larger than the rest is shouldering its way through the pack. They give way without resistance. It must be the leader."

"How many are there?"

"Eleven, total. The big one crouches, as though it's about to spring for Gláin's throat!"

Michael grimaced. "We Dwarves can take the heat. I heft my battle axe."

"Wait a minute. I have a better idea." Diana studies her Character Record. "Tatharína casts Charm Animal on the leader. If this works, we could have an entire wolf pack fighting with us in our next combat!"

• FIVE • COMBAT

In a combat situation, play is resolved in terms of feet and seconds. Each character may attempt to perform one and only one *action* once every 10 seconds. This 10 second period is call a *round*. A round usually takes considerably longer than 10 seconds of real time to resolve. The 7 allowable *actions* are:

- Casting a Spell
- Making a Missile Attack
- Making a Melee Attack
- Moving at a Run
- Moving and Quick Attacking
- Moving at a Walk
- Performing a Maneuver

Certain factors may affect the *action* that a character may take. Most of these are obvious and can be resolved by using common sense (e.g., a character with a broken arm can't use a two-handed weapon or a bow; an unconscious character can perform no *action*, except perhaps breathing; etc.).

The Gamemaster is the final authority on these matters.

The GM has to handle the physical layout (see GAMEMASTER GUIDELINES) and all of the non-player characters, but the players can help by keeping track of the *Damage Taken* by each character.

THE COMBAT ACTIONS

Casting a Spell: A character that is *casting a spell* must follow the procedure outlined in the section on SPELLS.

Making a Missile Attack: A character that is *making a missile attack* may fire at any target in sight and within: 200' for bows, 100' for slings, or 50' for spears, daggers, warhammers, swords, and maces.

Making a Melee Attack: A character that is *making a melee attack* may attack any foe within 5 feet.

Moving at a Run: A character that is *moving at a run* must roll the dice and add his Movement bonus:

- If the result is 2, 3, 4, or 5, the character stumbles and may only move 10'
- Otherwise, the character may move up to a distance equal to the result multiplied by 10'.

Moving and Quick Attacking: A character that is *moving and quick attacking* may move up to 25' plus 10' multiplied by his or her Movement bonus; and then may make a melee attack against any foe within 5'. The attacking character's Melee OB is halved (round down) for such an attack.

Moving at a Walk: A character that is *moving at a walk* may move up to 50' plus 10' multiplied by his or her Movement bonus.

Performing a Maneuver: Any character that is *performing a maneuver* may attempt any maneuver (e.g., climbing a wall, leaping a ditch, picking a lock, recovering a weapon, etc.). Certain activities may also be performed. The maneuver or activity may not be attempted if the character has *Taken Damage* during the round.

GM NOTE

- A running character must stop movement if he or she passes within 5' of a foe or if the character passes within 20' of a foe whose action is to move and quick attack the runner.
- A moving character may shift items and equipment on his or her person (e.g., draw a weapon, sling a shield, take out some herbs, etc.), but the distance that the character may move is decreased by 10 feet for each item shifted (for that round).
- Terrain may also slow a character: going up a hill, through a thicket, across a stream, across sand, etc. It is suggested that a Gamemaster cut movement by half for such terrain.



THE SEQUENCING OF ACTIONS

At the beginning of each round:

- Each player should decide what *action* he or she wishes to perform for that round.
- At the same time, the Gamemaster should decide what *action* the non-player characters will take.
- Then each player must state to the GM what actions his or her character will take.
- The *actions* are then resolved in the order specified by the sequence below.
- Actions should be specific as to direction and targets; for example: "I attack the biggest Orc," "I run away from the Orc towards the large tree," etc.
- Actions may be based upon actions of others; for example: "I run after the Orc," "I will attack anyone that approaches me," etc.

Actions are normally performed in the following order during a round (unless a character cancels his or her actions):

- 1) Spell Casting Simultaneous
- 2) Making Missile Attacks Simultaneous
- 3) Making Melee Attacks Order based on Agility
- 4) Movement at a Run Order based on Agility
- 5) Movement and Quick Attacks Order based on Agility
- 6) Movement at a Walk Order based on Agility
- 7) Performing Maneuvers Order based on Agility

Actions of the same type (other than Spell Casting and Missile Attacks) are resolved based upon the combatants' Agility bonuses. For example, the character with the highest Agility bonus attacks first, the next highest second, and so on. If two combatants have the same Agility bonus, they attack simultaneously.

ATTACKS

Attacks occur when a character (the attacker) attempts to affect or harm an opponent (the defender or target). To make an attack:

- 1) Subtract the defender's *Defensive bonus* (DB) from the attacker's appropriate *Offensive bonus* (*Melee OB* or *Missile OB*) and *roll the dice*.
- 2) Using the *Combat Table* below, cross-index the *dice roll* (in the vertical column on the left side of the table) and the difference between the OB and the DB (in the horizontal row at the top of the table).
- 3) The result is the amount of damage that the defender takes (increase his *Damage Taken* by that amount). The special results "U" and "K" end the combat immediately with the defender being knocked out (U, Unconscious) or, more rarely, killed (K).

COMBAT TABLE											
Dice	Attacker's OB - Defender's DB *										
Roll	+6	+5	+4	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	-4
2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	3	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	5	4	3	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
5	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	0	0	0
6	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	0	0
7	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	1	0
8	U	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	1
9	U	U	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2
10	U	U	U	U	8	7	7	6	5	4	3
11	K	U	U	U	U	U	8	8	7	6	5
12	K	K	K	K	U	U	U	U	U	U	U

* — If OB-DB difference is greater than +6, add the excess to the *Damage Taken* by the target; if the difference is less than -4, treat it as -4.

Results:

= A number result indicates the amount of damage taken; if the total damage taken exceeds the combatant's Endurance, the character is unconscious.

U = Unconscious (knocked out), wounded, and out of action; the target's *Damage Taken* is now equal to his Endurance plus the Dice Roll that resulted in the U.

K = Killed.



EXAMPLE

In this example, we have three combatants: Galfaroth (a Human Ranger) and Gallind (an Elf Bard) fighting against an Orc called Snaga. The combat starts with Galfaroth and Gallind (10' apart) encountering Snaga on the opposite side of a 50' clearing in the forest. The stats that will be used in this example are:

Stat	Galfaroth	Gallind	Snaga
Movement	-1	1	-2
DB	2	1	1
Melee OB	2 (2H Sword) + .3 to damage	0 (QStaff) + 1 to damage	3 (Spear)
Missile OB	-1 (Spear)	1 (Bow)	-2 (Spear)
Perception	2	2	0
Magical	-2	4	-3
Endurance	40	35	50

On the first round: Galfaroth chooses to *make a missile attack*. Gallind decides to cast a Fire Bolt spell. And Snaga (known as “the mindless one” to both of his “friends”) decides to *move at a run* across the clearing.

- 1) *Spell casting* is first. Gallind rolls a 6 and adds his *Magical bonus* of 4. Since a 10 is more than 7, the spell is successful. The Orc takes 13 points of damage (i.e., a 2nd Dice Roll of 5 plus 2 times Gallind’s *Magical bonus* of 4). However, Gallind takes 6 points of damage from the strain of casting the spell.
- 2) *Missile attacks* are next. Galfaroth throws his spear. (Galfaroth’s *Missile OB* – Snaga’s DB) = -1 – 1 = -2. Galfaroth’s *dice roll* is 7. Cross-indexing on the *Combat Table*, we see that Snaga takes 1 point of damage (pretty weak shot).
- 3) The only action left is Snaga running across the clearing. He Rolls an 8 and adds his *Movement bonus* of -2 for a result of 6. So he moves up to 60’ and ends the round right in front of Gallind (the Elf that just Fire Bolted him) and 10’ from Galfaroth.

On the second round: Galfaroth chooses to *move and quick attack* to try and save Gallind. Gallind decides to *move at a run* away from the Orc. And Snaga decides to chop the Elf into little pieces (i.e., *make a melee attack*).

- 1) There are no *spells or missiles* so Snaga gets to *make his melee attack*. (Snaga’s *Melee OB* – Gallind’s DB) = 3 – 1 = 2. Snaga’s *dice roll* is 9. Cross-indexing on the *Combat Table*, we see that Gallind takes 7 points of damage (Ouch!).
- 2) Gallind runs away. He rolls a 4 and adds his *Movement bonus* for a result of 5. He stumbles and only moves 10’.
- 3) Galfaroth *moves and quick attacks* the Orc as he draws his 2-hand Sword. The Orc is 10’ away. Galfaroth can move 5’. (Following the guidelines: 25’ – 10’ [Galfaroth’s *Movement bonus* of -1 times 10’] – 10’ [because he draws his weapon] = 5’.) This puts him 5’ from the Orc, just close enough to attack with half of his *Melee OB*. (Half Galfaroth’s *Melee OB* – Snaga’s DB) = 1 – 1 = 0. Galfaroth’s *dice roll* is 12. Cross-indexing on the *Combat Table*, we see that Snaga is knocked unconscious (what a lucky break). Since Galfaroth’s *dice roll* was a 12, Snaga has taken 62 points of damage. (Snaga’s *Endurance + Dice Roll*) = 50 + 12 = 62.

On the third round: Galfaroth chooses to *perform a maneuver*. He goes over and picks up his spear. (The GM rules that this is automatically successful). Gallind also *performs a maneuver*. He walks over and ties up the Orc. Snaga remains unconscious (he has no choice).

H

several other figures.

Stuart picked up one of them — a Stone Giant — and examined it. "Are we going to encounter Giants the next time we play?"

"That would be telling," answered Barnabas with a smug look.

"I used to paint toy soldiers when I was a boy," said Stefan. "A little different, perhaps, than miniatures for fantasy role playing in Middle-earth, but I bet the principles are the same. You start with a base coat of white, then do flesh tones on face and hands, then work your way out through the clothing, armor, shields, and weapons. Of course, my first attempts looked pretty much like Gila monsters, but I got better. And it was a lot of fun."

• SIX •

COMBAT FACTORS

There are a variety of things that come up during tactical situations that cannot be covered in a set of rules. The Gamemaster must use common sense and a die roll (low is bad, high is good) to make a decision in such cases. Several techniques described below can aid these decisions.

REPRESENTING THE PHYSICAL SITUATION

The Gamemaster must decide how to keep track of movement, the relative positions of all of the characters, ranges for firing missiles and casting spells, and the layout of the area in which the PCs are adventuring. This usually requires a playing surface that represents the physical situation and playing pieces representing the characters and other combatants. Many possibilities exist for such play aids, and the Gamemaster may elect to use whichever seems most appropriate for his or her game and for a particular situation. Here we present one technique that anyone should be able to use.

"Have you ever painted miniatures before?" asked Kate.

Newspaper covered the dining room table, along with cans of spray paint, jars of enamels, paint brushes, and a collection of miniature Elves, Hobbits, Dwarves, a Wizard, and

The Gamemaster can sketch the layout on a sheet of paper (or on a black board) and mark the position of each character on it. For small sheets of paper we suggest a scale of 1" = 50'. For a larger surface, 1" = 20' or 1" = 10' would be more appropriate. You can keep track of distance with a ruler. The problem with this technique is lack of detail and the hassles of erasing each time a character moves.

To solve part of this problem we suggest that a playing piece be used to represent the position of each character. These can be as elaborate as the players and Gamemaster wish. Suggestions include: commercially available miniatures (small statues of various types of fantasy inhabitants and creatures), chess pieces, coins, stand-up cardboard figures (a whole set are included with *LOR*), or square pieces (1/2" to 1" on a side) of cardboard marked with the characters names. The cardboard pieces (called counters) are particularly easy to make and use; they can be colored or decorated to aid the flavor of play.

FACING

The Gamemaster may wish to use some sort of mechanism for keeping track of which way each character is facing, since it really helps determine what each character is aware of and what he or she is capable of doing.

CONFLICTING ACTIONS

Sometimes the *actions* of two or more characters may conflict, and the Gamemaster must resolve the problem. In general, both should make *dice rolls* modified by their respective *Movement bonuses*. Then the character with the higher of the two results succeeds, and the difference between the two results gives the Gamemaster some idea of how successful he or she was. The same result by both characters means a draw of some kind, and the Gamemaster must decide what happens. These conflict rolls are just used as a measure of the effectiveness and quickness of a character's *action* and do not affect the *action* being attempted.

ORIENTATION

If a character takes a confusing *action* (e.g., dives, falls, is knocked down, etc.), the Gamemaster may require an "orientation" *maneuver* (modified by the *Perception bonus* of the character) to determine the awareness and readiness of the character. The GM should assign a difficulty as indicated in SECTION TWO. If the character fails the *maneuver*, he or she loses the chance to take an *action* for one round.

BASIC PERCEPTION

If something happens during a combat that might be noticed by the characters (e.g., the arrival of new combatants, a character sneaking up to ambush someone, etc.), the Gamemaster may require a "perception" *maneuver* (modified by the *Perception bonus* of the character) from all characters who might notice it. The GM should assign difficulties as indicated in SECTION TWO.

CHARACTER COMMUNICATION

When characters talk or plan in the midst of combat, it is assumed that they are talking out loud and may be heard by their foes. Of course if they are close together they may speak softly or whisper. If a long complicated discussion arises or a complex suggestion is made by one character to another, that should constitute their *action* for that round.



If a group of characters holds a discussion on what to do or where to go, the amount of real time spent talking by the players should be treated by the Gamemaster as the time spent talking in the game by the characters. For example, if the group of players take 5 minutes to decide on how to enter a particular door, it will take 30 rounds of game time (30 rounds at 10 seconds a round equals 5 minutes).



"ou've all lost your water skins, haven't you?" said Barnabas with a considering glance.

"Wouldn't you know!" spluttered Stuart. "Who could have guessed that those Orcs would eat them!"

Michael agreed. "Pretty wierd, but I suppose they had to eat something when they couldn't eat us. And 'eating your shoe leather' used to be more than a figure of speech."

"Well, you've been without water all morning now, and you're beginning to feel a bit parched. I suggest you start looking for a stream or a spring, unless you want to take damage due to extreme dehydration," said Barnabas.

Jennifer was squinting at her character sheet again.

"Jenny Foureyes," taunted her brother. "Why don't you get your glasses?"

"Pooh! I can see fine. I always squint when I'm thinking — just like you bite your lip." She tossed her head. "Barney, Rilwen's been over this ground, hasn't she? I mean, she was born in Mirkwood. So, I ought to have a good idea of where to find water, especially with my sense of direction."

• SEVEN • GAMEMASTER GUIDELINES

KEEPING TRACK OF TIME

Keeping track of time requires that you keep a running total of the amount of time that passes during the players' adventures.

Passage of time will often be indicated by the adventure text, but the GM will often have to "wing it" and use common sense to arrive at appropriate values for the passage of time.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Characters will become more powerful and skillful as they gain experience from their adventures. In *LOR*, experience is represented by *experience points* (*EPs*) which are awarded by the GM for good ideas, successful *maneuvers*, combat, spell casting, or meeting the challenges presented by an adventure.

Each player should keep a running total of points in the space provided on his or her *Character Record*. These points have no affect on the abilities of a character until his or her EP total reaches at least 150 points. For every 150 experience points a player may choose one of these options:

- 1) Assign an additional +1 bonus to any of the skills (see SECTION THREE) or
- 2) Change any "-2" skill bonus to "+1" or
- 3) Choose two more spells that the PC may cast or
- 4) Roll the dice and increase the PC's *Endurance* by 2 plus that number.

150 *LOR* experience points are equivalent to approximately 5000 *MERP* (*Middle-earth Role Playing*) experience points.

	Maneuvers	Spells	Combat	Ideas	Group Challenges	TOTAL
Tolman						
Lily						
Gallind						
Tatharína						
Gláin						
Rilwen						

The GM should keep a record of the *EPs* (*experience points*) earned by the PCs throughout an adventure. At the end of the adventure, the GM can total the numbers recorded and tell each player how many *EPs* his or her character earned.

We recommend using a chart like the one above to help with this record keeping task. The adventure text will usually contain suggestions for the experience earned for specific ideas (the *Ideas* column) and the completion of certain tasks (the *Group Challenges* column). However, you should use the guidelines below to determine *EPs* for *maneuvers*, hitting an opponent in combat, and casting a spell.

The difficulty of a *maneuver* determines the number of EPs a character receives for successfully performing it.

Difficulty	EPs	Difficulty	EPs
RoutineΔ4	0	HardΔ9	10
Very EasyΔ5	1	Very HardΔ11	15
EasyΔ6	2	Extremely HardΔ13	20
LightΔ7	3	Sheer FollyΔ15	30
MediumΔ8	5	AbsurdΔ18	50

When a PC delivers a successful blow with a weapon in combat, he or she receives 1 EP for each point of *Damage Taken* by the opponent due to the attack. A U result from the *Combat Table* is worth 12 *experience points*, and a K result is worth 15 EPs.

When a character casts a spell, he or she receives 1 *experience point* for each point of *Damage Taken* as a consequence of casting it. For example, if Gallind casts a Fire Bolt at Lawrie the Troll, he will receive 6 EPs for the spell.



FOOD AND WATER

Every day each character needs to consume food and water. For every day that food is not consumed, increase the character's *Damage Taken* by 3. For every day that water is not consumed, increase the character's *Damage Taken* by 6. This damage may not be healed until the character consumes the normally required food and/or water.

B

arney, what's it like to GM a campaign?" probed Uncle Stefan. "Is it something I could learn, do you think?"

"I don't see why not," answered Barnabas. "It is more time consuming than being a player, but to be frank I enjoy it more. So it's worth the effort. I guess the main question is: are you a story teller, at heart, or are you an actor? If you like creating stories — planning out adventures, taking on the roles of many different people — then you'll like GMing. If you prefer really developing one character — your own player character — discovering nuances and experiencing the hero's role, you might prefer to let someone else GM."

Stefan tugged at his beard. "I'm not really sure. Is it possible to enjoy both?"

"More than possible. Probable. Why don't you try GMing tonight's adventure? I'll role play Gallind for you, and you can be the Gamemaster. The group is at the start of 'Bad Men, Full O' Thievery.' If you skim the adventure this afternoon, you should be ready to GM it this evening!"

• EIGHT • ACTION SEQUENCES

Action sequences guide the GM and the players (and thus the NPCs and the PCs) through game actions such as sneaking through a desert canyon, fleeing from an enemy, or setting fire to a hay wagon while the group's Scout scales a fortress wall and enters one of its loopholes. FRP adventures are usually composed of many action sequences, played one after another.

"DAWN COMES EARLY," the first *LOR* adventure, possesses fourteen action sequences. The one entitled "BE STONE TO YOU!" is a specific version of the more general game sequence of combat.

Later in the adventure, an action sequence called AN UNEXPECTED BRAWL also contains combat. However, the text simply refers the GM to page ?? of *The Guidelines* where the general action sequence COMBAT is located. That way, the instructions for GMing combat need not be repeated over and over again. After you've been role playing for a few weeks, you probably won't even have to refer to the COMBAT action sequence. You'll have it memorized!

Once you've played several *LOR* adventures, you may wish to create your own adventures in Middle-earth. A combination of the action sequences presented here would provide an excellent structure with which to start. Of course, the possibilities for different action sequences are endless. Those appearing in this section are merely some of the most common. They include:

- 1) Sneaking Through Town By Night
- 2) Getting Into Position
- 3) Breaking & Entering
- 4) Retreating From a Site
- 5) Fleeing an Enemy
- 6) Combat
- 7) Sneaking Through Countryside
- 8) Scouting the Unknown
- 9) Ambushing an Enemy
- 10) Escaping From Capture
- 11) Picking a Pocket
- 12) Tracking Through Wilderness
- 13) Following Quarry
- 14) Making a Distraction

SNEAKING THROUGH TOWN BY NIGHT

- 1** Describe the scene at the start of the *action sequence*.
- 2** Ask each player what precautions his or her character is taking to pass both unseen and unheard.
- 3** Assign bonuses or penalties to each character, using the chart below as a guide.

soft-soled shoes	+1
dark-hued cloak	+1
Elven cloak	+2
light-colored garments	-1
heavy boots	-1
chain mail	-2
loose, unmuffled metal gear in pack	-1
plate mail	-3
no talking	+0
limited talking	-1
unrestricted talking	-3

- 4** One by one, instruct each player to *roll the dice* (be sure to add or subtract the appropriate bonuses) to determine how stealthily his or her character moves. You may use the chart below to translate the number into describable results.
 - 1 You stumble, crash into a wobbly picket fence which collapses, and yelp as a stone bruises your shin. Record 1 point of *Damage Taken* on your *Character Record*.
 - 2 You startle a stray dog, and it bounds away with a bark.
 - 3 A tickling sensation attacks your nose, and you sneeze.
 - 4 Shadows seem few, and you find yourself frequently illuminated by starlight, moonlight, or lamplight from those few windows where it shines forth.
 - 5 The ground seems very uneven, and your footfalls are more than audible as you stub your toes on a rock.
 - 6 Your footfalls are audible, but only just barely. Shadows are plentiful, and you rarely leave their sheltering gloom.
 - 7 The breeze ruffles your cloak (tunic, robe, etc.), but your steps make no sound.
 - 8 Firelight from an uncurtained window flickers momentarily on your face, but no one is present to observe you.
 - 9 Two residents weave their way home from a tavern, but they never notice you lurking in a shadow.
 - 10.... You narrowly avoid stepping in a puddle, and sigh with relief; no one is present to hear your sigh.
 - 11.... A stray cat hisses as you pass by, but no other resident of the town notices your presence.
 - 12+ You move like the drifting shadow of a cloud. No noise attends your passage. No light illuminates any portion of your body.

5 If every character obtains a 6 or higher on the chart in stage 4, the group passes through the town unnoticed and unhindered. You should describe what they hear and see as they walk. This will vary depending on the town.

6 If one or more of the characters obtains a result below 6 on the chart in stage 4, consult the chart below to determine the reactions of the citizenry of the town.

A roll of 4 or 5 (but not lower): One person notices the group from the vantage of a window. If there is a public alert for the group or one of its members, he or she will summon the watch or the local equivalent (unless restrained by the group).

A roll of 2 or 3 (but not lower): A fellow night traveller notices the group. If there is a reward posted for the apprehension of the group or one of its members, he or she will summon the watch or its local equivalent (unless restrained by the group). If the group tries to restrain a reward-seeker, use the COMBAT *action sequence* or whatever is most appropriate.

A roll of 1: The resident in the house to which the fence belongs will emerge angrily. If someone in the group succeeds in mollifying the enraged citizen (a PerceptionΔII maneuver — he or she must *roll the dice* and obtain a total of 11 or more, including any skill bonuses), the group may continue onward unhindered.

If no one tries to mollify the fence-owner, or the persuasive PC obtains 5-10 on the Perception maneuver, he or she will summon the watch.

If a group member rolls a 1-4 on the Perception maneuver, the fence-owner becomes more wrathful and will try to detain the PCs until the watch arrives. If the angry citizen tries to detain the group, use the COMBAT *action sequence* or whatever is most appropriate.

GETTING INTO POSITION

1 Describe the immediate surroundings of the objective.

2 Ask the players if one PC will scout the area first. If so use the *action sequence*: SCOUTING THE UNKNOWN to guide the Scout.

3 Encourage the Scout, when he or she returns, to communicate anything new learned about the area or the objective. The players may modify their plans, if they wish.

4 Ask the players where each PC will be positioned in the area. Have them point this out on a map or rough schematic, perhaps tracing the route each will take. Ask whether or not they will sneak into position.

5 Describe to each player what his or her PC experiences while moving into position. If the PCs will sneak into position, assign a difficulty level for the *Subterfuge maneuvers* each will make. Instruct each to *roll the dice*, and use the results to determine whether or not they are seen. If they are noticed (whether sneaking or simply walking or running), use the appropriate *action sequence* to guide the events that follow. (Sometimes there will be no consequences to being spotted.)

6 Describe to each player what his or her PC experiences once in position.

BREAKING & ENTERING

1 Describe the point of entry — window, door, loop-hole halfway up a 50' wall, etc. — to the players.

2 Ask the players: who is standing guard and who is attempting to breach the locked building or structure?

3 Describe the nature of the mechanism or object preventing entry into the structure. Assign a difficulty rating to the *maneuvers* that must be accomplished to force entry.

4 Instruct the player whose character is attempting to force entry to *roll the dice*.

5 Describe the degree of success he or she achieves.

6 Describe what those PCs on guard experience.

7 If the entry attempt is successful, use the *action sequence* appropriate to whatever the PCs plan to do once inside.

8 If the attempt fails, another PC may be able to attempt entry. Or the group may be able to attempt entry at a different access point. The specific factors of a specific adventure will determine whether this is possible or not.

RETREATING FROM A SITE

1 Ask the players their route and how they will travel. For example, they might be sneaking, walking casually, or sprinting, depending on the circumstances.

2 Describe what they see, hear, and smell as they retreat. Describe any obstacles they encounter. These may vary from terrain features to people standing in the way.

3 Ask how the PCs handle these obstacles, assigning difficulty levels to any *maneuvers* necessary.

4 When they reach safety, describe the area.

5 If they do not reach safety, use the appropriate *action sequence* to guide play.

FLEEING AN ENEMY

You may also use this *action sequence* when the PCs are chasing a fleeing enemy. Simply reverse the roles of the PCs and the NPCs. Wherever the word enemy

appears, substitute PC or PCs. And, when the term PC is written, substitute enemy or foe or NPC.

1 If the PCs are involved in combat, the enemy will obtain a melee attack at the fleeing PCs' undefended backs. If the enemy has missile weapons, they may also shoot the PCs as long as they remain in range. Use the **COMBAT action sequence** to resolve this last combat *action*.

2 How long will pursuit continue? If only 3 or 4 rounds, you may continue to use the **COMBAT action sequence** to resolve the chase. All participants will probably be *moving at a run*, and you need only compare the distances covered to determine whether the PCs escape their pursuers.

3 If the chase will last for longer than 5 or at most 6 rounds, it could be very tedious to play out all the rounds of *moving at a run*. Instead, have each PC make a *maneuver* to elude his pursuers. Assign a difficulty level to the *maneuver* based on the speed of the PC, the speed of the pursuer, the presence or absence of bystanders, and the nature of the terrain to be covered.

4 Describe the chase in vivid detail. Use the results of the *maneuvers* to guide your description.

5 If the PC eludes the pursuer, let him or her know when safety is at hand.

6 If the PC does not elude his or her pursuer, use the appropriate *action sequence* for whatever happens when the enemy catches the PC. (**TAUNTING TROLLS** is a adjusted version of this *action sequence*, since the PCs don't want the Trolls to catch them too quickly, but do not want to elude their foes entirely!)

COMBAT

As combat begins, all the PCs and NPCs must choose an *action* for the first round. There are 7 possible *actions* (see **SECTION FIVE**), but a character may do only 1 each round. Combat may continue for many rounds. At the beginning of each round, all the combatants must specify the action to be taken.

1 The first *combat action* in a round is always *spell casting*. Tell each player whose PC casts a spell to *roll the dice*. If the *dice roll* plus the PC's *Magical bonus* is 7 or more, the spell is successfully cast.

Read the description on page 10 to determine the results of the spell. The player should note down the *Damage Taken* (due to spell casting) on his or her PC's Character Record.

Go through this process for each PC.

Also *roll the dice* for each NPC casting a spell. Determine the results of successful spells, describe them, and note down any *Damage Taken* by the NPCs due to spell casting.

2 The second combat action in a round is *making missile attacks*. Each combatant who throws or fires a missile must specify at which foe he or she is aiming and *roll the dice*.

Subtract the defender's *Defense bonus* (DB) from the attacker's *Missile OB*.

Using the Combat Table on page 17, cross-index the *dice roll* and the difference between the DB and OB.

The result is the amount of damage taken by the defender. Several combatants may all fire on one individual at once. Just keep track of the *Damage Taken* by the target.

Go through the process of *making a missile attack* for each combatant (PCs and NPCs) who is doing so.

3 The third combat action in a round is *making melee attacks*.

Compare the *Agility stats* of all the PCs and all the NPCs *making melee attacks*. Whoever has the highest *Agility* will attack first. (If the *Agility* skills are the same, the attacks are simultaneous.) The attacker must be within 5 feet of the individual he or she intends to attack.

Subtract the defender's *Defensive bonus* (DB) from the attacker's *Melee OB*. *Roll the dice* for the attacker.

Using the Combat Table on page 17, cross-index the *dice roll* and the difference between the DB and OB.

The result is the amount of *Damage Taken* by the defender. (This may be modified by the weapons used.)

Compare the *Agility stats* of the remaining combatants — those who have not yet attacked. Again, whoever has the highest *Agility* will attack next. Guide the character through the process for making a *melee attack*.

When all combatants who intended to *make a melee attack* have done so, go to the next stage.

4 The fourth combat action is *moving at a run*.

Compare the *Agility stats* of the runners. The one with the highest stat will start running first.

The running individual should *roll the dice* and add his or her *Movement bonus*.

If the result is less than 6, the runner stumbles and moves only 10 feet.

If the result is 6 or more, the runner moves a distance of the result multiplied by 10'.

Go through this process for all combatants *moving at a run* in order of their *Agility stats*.

Determine how far everyone running goes and move their counters on the map, floorplan, or combat display accordingly.

5 The fifth combat action is *moving and quick attacking*.

Compare the *Agility stats* of those who will *move and quick attack*. The one with the highest stat will do so first.

Multiply the attacker's *Movement bonus* by 10' and add 25' to it. This is how far the attacker may move. Move the character's counter on the display accordingly.

Halve the attacker's *Melee OB* (round down).

Subtract the defender's *Defense bonus* (DB) from this halved *Melee OB*.

Using the Combat Table on page 17, cross-index the dice roll and the difference between the DB and OB.

The result is the amount of damage taken by the defender.

Go through this process for each individual *moving and quick attacking* in order of their *Agility stats*, from highest to lowest.

6 The sixth combat action is *moving at a walk*.

The fastest walker (with the highest *Agility stat*) will go first.

Multiply the walker's *Movement bonus* by 10' and add 50' to it. This is how far the walker may move. Move his or her counter on the display accordingly.

Go through this process for all combatants *moving at a walk* in order of their *Agility stats*.

7 The seventh combat action is *performing a maneuver or an activity*.

The quickest person (again with the highest *Agility*) will start his or her *maneuver* first.

Determine whether the action to be taken by the PC is really one *maneuver* or a series of *maneuvers*. Leaping a low wall is one *maneuver*. Pulling the dagger sheathed in a foe's boot is probably two *maneuvers*: one to sneak behind the enemy while he concentrates on bashing someone else and another to pull the weapon from his boot. Thus, the sneaking might be attempted in this round, but the theft would occur the next round.

Assign a difficulty rating to the *maneuver* and determine what stat is applicable. (*Activities* are automatically successful, if the proper tools are present. However, an *activity* may require more than 1 round to complete.)

Obtain a *dice roll* for the *maneuver* and add or subtract the applicable bonuses or penalties.

Compare the result with the difficulty rating. If the result is equal to or greater than the difficulty rating, the *maneuver* succeeds. Otherwise, it fails.

Based on the success or failure of the *maneuver*, describe what happened.

Go through this process for all combatants *making a maneuver* in order of their *Agility stats*.

8 Stages 1 through 7 describe all of the seven *combat actions* in a round. Often, only two or three of the *combat actions* will be used in a particular round.

Each time you reach stage 8, one more round has passed. Go through stages 1 to 7 as many times as there are rounds in the combat. When the combat ends will be determined by the goals of the PCs and foes involved.

SNEAKING THROUGH COUNTRYSIDE

1 Describe the terrain through which the PCs will be sneaking.

2 Describe any special conditions such as fog, mist, rain, darkness, bright sunlight, dawn or dusk, or haze which will affect the difficulty level of sneaking. Assign appropriate bonuses or penalties using the chart below as a guide.

darkness	+6
lightening storm	+4
dusk	+3
dawn	+2
heavy fog	+3
rain	+2
drizzle or mist	+1
windy	+1
overcast	+0
hazy	+0
bright sun	-1

3 Ask the players to describe any special precautions their PCs take to move unseen and unheard. Assign bonuses or penalties to each character, using the chart below as a guide.

soft-soled shoes	+1
green or brown cloak	+1
Elven cloak	+2
bright-colored garments	-1
hood or hat	+1
heavy boots	-1
running	-3
walking	-1
moving slowly	+0
creeping on hands and knees	+1
chain mail	-2
loose, unmuffled metal gear in pack	-1
plate mail	-3
uncovered metal shield	-1
no talking	+0
limited talking	-1
unrestricted talking	-3

4 One by one, instruct each player to *roll the dice* (be sure to add or subtract the appropriate bonuses) to determine how stealthily his or her character moves. You may use the chart below to translate the number into describable results for the player.

I You stumble on a large rock hidden beneath an even larger bush. Arms flailing, you fall with a thud, landing on a dry branch that breaks with a loud crack! You have just advertised your presence to all creatures within 500 feet! Record 1 point of *Damage Taken* on your *Character Record*.

2 You startle a fox, and it bounds away with a sharp bark.

3 A tickling sensation attacks your nose, and you sneeze.

4 Vegetation seems sparse, and you find yourself frequently crossing wide, open spaces where you must show up to anyone watching like an apple on the dining room table at home!

5 The ground seems very uneven, and your footfalls on the earth sound like the beating of a stick against a drum.

6 Some leaves rustle as you move forward, but the breeze is hushing through the foliage and masks the sound. Bushes/tall grass are plentiful, and you rarely emerge from their shelter.

7 The breeze ruffles your cloak (tunic, robe, etc.), but your steps make no sound.

8 Dappled sunlight flickers across your body, glinting off the buttons of your blouse (cloak pin, belt buckle, etc.).

9 Two rabbits slowly lollipop away as you approach them.

10 You narrowly avoid stepping in a woodland puddle, and rustle the dead leaves lying around it.

11 Two grazing deer stare at you as you pass by.

12+ You move like the drifting shadow of a cloud. Not even a weasel would stir a whisker as you passed by!

5 Depending on whether an enemy or another observer is present and the observation powers of that individual, the group may pass through the area unnoticed and unhindered. (Make a *Perception* roll for the observer. The difficulty of the *maneuver* depends on the specific circumstances.) You should describe what the PCs hear and see as they walk. This will vary with the terrain.

6 If the PCs are spotted, use the appropriate *action sequence* to guide the play.

SCOUTING THE UNKNOWN

1 Describe the features initially visible to the PCs from a distance.

2 Ask the players who will move closer to the unknown area or structure and whether this person is sneaking or not.

3 If the Scout is sneaking, determine the difficulty level of the *Subterfuge maneuver* and have the player *roll the dice*. If there is an enemy actively looking for intruders, modify his or her *Perception maneuver* by the amount the PC's *Subterfuge maneuver* exceeds the threshold of success.

If the enemy is not really looking for intruders, the NPC should make a *Perception maneuver* only if the PC fails his or her *Subterfuge maneuver*.

If the Scout is spotted by an enemy, use the appropriate *action sequence* for any immediate results. If the observer merely reports the sighting, the consequences may arrive later, after this *action sequence* is complete.

4 Describe all that the Scout observes while moving towards or within the area to be scouted. The PC may need to make *Perception maneuvers* to notice well-concealed things or hidden traps.

5 Describe the results of any traps triggered by the PC. This may involve *Damage Taken* or spells that produce more subtle results.

6 If the Scout encounters a barrier or blockade, he or she may need to overcome it to proceed. Use the *action sequence* **BREAKING & ENTERING** as necessary.

7 When the PC returns to the group, encourage the Scout to report all that was observed.

AMBUSHING AN ENEMY

You may also use this *action sequence* when the PCs are ambushed by an enemy. Simply reverse the roles of the PCs and the NPCs. Wherever the word enemy appears, substitute PC or PCs. And, when the term PC is written, substitute enemy or foe or NPCs.

1 Describe the terrain or the surroundings where the PCs wish to set up an ambush.

2 Have the PCs make *Perception maneuvers* to find the best spot for the ambush.

3 Encourage the players to plan the ambush. Below is a list of potential points to be addressed along with suggested *experience points* earned by those PCs who think of them for the first time.

- Where will the enemy approach? Are they moving along a road or path? Or are they travelling cross-country? Is there a way to channel their approach to the point of ambush? (*Experience Points:* 10)
- Behind which terrain features will the PCs hide? Are they close enough to the road or track to permit attack? Can more camouflage be arranged by the placement of extra branches or by rolling a few boulders? Must the PCs wear green or brown clothing in order to remain concealed? (*Experience Points:* 8)
- Will the PCs leap forward after the enemy passes to attack them from behind using melee weapons? Or will they rely on missile attacks from a distance? (*Experience Points:* 6)
- What will the PCs do if they are spotted before they can make the ambush? Attack anyway? Retreat? (*Experience Points:* 6)

4 When the plans are complete, the PCs must implement them. They may need to accomplish a few *activities* (such as digging a shallow trench behind the boulders that are not quite big enough to hide all six PCs) before settling in to await the enemy. If the preparations are too elaborate, the enemy may arrive before the PCs are ready! In this case, the *activities* would become *maneuvers* to complete them within the limited time frame. You will need to assign difficulty levels and choose which stat is relevant as seems appropriate. Often the passage of time will not be an element.

5 When the PCs conceal themselves, instruct them to make *Subterfuge maneuvers*. The terrain and their preparations will be the deciding factors in assigning a difficulty level to the maneuver. The degree of success will determine how concealed the PCs are from the enemy.

6 As the enemy approaches, the NPCs (non-player characters) should get *Perception maneuvers* to determine if they spot the hidden PCs. Depending on how successful the PCs were with their *Subterfuge maneuvers*, the enemy may have very little chance of seeing them.

Modify the NPCs' *Perception maneuvers* by the amount that the average of the PCs' *Subterfuge maneuvers* exceeded the threshold of success.

If the enemy does spot the waiting ambush, they may choose to:

- a) Run away. If so, use the **FLEEING AN ENEMY** *action sequence*, switching the roles of the PCs and the "enemy." Of course, the PCs may choose to let them escape.
- b) Come forward prepared to fight. In this case, the PCs are probably close to the road or track and planning to make melee attacks. Use the **COMBAT** *action sequence*, unless the PCs choose to run away.
- c) Approach the PCs using another more favorable route and fight. Again, use the **COMBAT** *action sequence*, unless the PCs choose to run away.

7 If the enemy does not spot the PCs, the initial part of the ambush should go as planned. If the PCs laid a trap for their foes — perhaps a concealed pit or a net that drops from the trees — have the NPCs make *Agility* or *General maneuvers* to avoid it. The difficulty level will depend on the nature of the trap. If the PCs planned to attack their foes, use the **COMBAT** *action sequence*.

ESCAPING FROM CAPTURE

1 Describe the surroundings. Are the PCs lying in a clearing in the woods, tied hand and foot, or locked in the cell of a simple lockhouse? Other possibilities include a Hobbitish lockhole, the dungeon of a mighty castle, a barred enclosure outdoors (resembling a zoo cage or even an oversized bird cage), or a barred wagon (like a circus wagon).

2 Describe the nature of the restraints on the PCs' persons. Are they knotted ropes, iron manacles attached to chains bolted to the wall or floor, steel cuffs, or crystalline threads whose strength is magical rather than physical? Are the restraints attached at the ankles, the wrists, the throat, or all three?

3 Describe the guards present and any not present but known to the PC. How many guards are there? What weapons do they carry? How tough are they? Do they stand at a post or walk an assigned beat?

4 Encourage the PCs to ponder all of the information you've told them. They may wish to abandon the attempt to escape. Or they may adjust any plans they've made thus far.

5 Assign difficulty levels to the *Subterfuge maneuver* necessary to 1) escape from the bonds holding the PCs and 2) to loosen the bonds of the others once one PC is free of his or her own. Instruct the players to *roll the dice*. Use the results to describe each PCs' success or failure.

6 Do the guards notice what's happening? Do they care? Allow them a *Perception maneuver* to notice the PCs' actions. Their reaction will depend on the specific situation and people involved.

If the PCs were restrained by only the ropes or chains on their persons, they may be able to run away before the guards can react. Either the **FLEEING AN ENEMY** *action sequence* or the **COMBAT** *action sequence* may be suitable.

If there were no guards, the PCs may be completely at liberty. Or merely at liberty to tackle the locks on the door of a prison cell.

7 Assign difficulty levels to the *Subterfuge maneuvers* (picking locks, etc.) or *General maneuvers* (climbing pit walls, etc.) necessary to escape from the enclosure holding the PCs. Instruct the players to *roll the dice*. Use the results to describe each PCs' success or failure.

8 Again, do the guards notice what's happening? Allow them a *Perception maneuver*. Depending on the guards' powers of observation and on the specific situation, the PCs may need to sneak away, run away, or fight the guards. Use **FLEEING AN ENEMY**, **COMBAT**, or any other *action sequence* that seems appropriate.

9 Once free of bonds and cell, the remainder of the escape will be heavily influenced by the nature of the holding facility and the guards present.

The PCs may face successive waves of traps, locked doors, and guards before finally reaching territory not dominated by their captors. Even then, they may need to elude a persistent pursuit.

In a simpler facility with a less tenacious enemy, one tussle with the guards at the front gate may be all it takes to achieve freedom. Use any *action sequences* that seem appropriate to the specific situation. Or create a new *action sequence* of your own, if necessary.

PICKING A POCKET

1 Describe the scene in which the theft is to take place. Bustling crowds and many shadowy nooks and alleys will make the task easier.

2 Assign a difficulty level to the *Subterfuge maneuver* of moving into the proximity of the target without raising his or her awareness. Tell the player to *roll the dice*. This will determine if the PC was sufficiently sneaky to avoid attracting any attention.

3 Of course, the prospective victim may be an extraordinarily observant person. Make a *Perception roll* for the NPC. If the PC succeeded in being very sneaky, the NPC should notice the thief only by successfully making a Sheer Folly or an Absurd *Perception maneuver*.

Modify the NPC's *Perception maneuver* by the amount that the PC's *Subterfuge maneuver* exceeded the success threshold.

4 If the victim notices the thief, the NPC may:

- a) Ignore the PC, in which case the attempt to pickpocket may proceed as planned.
- b) Elude the PC. The NPC should make a *Movement maneuver*. If it is successful, the prospective victim simply stays out of reach of the PC, and the theft cannot be attempted.
- c) Summon the watch. Depending on the relative proximity or distance of law enforcement persons, the PC may be able to slip away before they are summoned.
- d) Be ready to grab the PC's wrist when the attempt is made. The PC should make a *Perception maneuver* to notice that the prospective victim is aware of him or her. The plan to pickpocket may be abandoned if the PC so wishes.
- e) Be ready to attack the PC when the attempt is made. Again, the PC should make a *Perception maneuver* to notice that the prospective victim is aware of him or her. The plan to pickpocket may be abandoned if the PC so wishes.

5 When the PC is in position to pick the pocket, he or she should make a *Subterfuge maneuver* to do so. Whether or not the NPC is aware of the PC — determined in stage 4 — will affect the difficulty level of the *maneuver*. (Again, modify the PC's *Subterfuge maneuver* by the amount that the NPC's *Perception maneuver* exceeded the success threshold.)

- a) If the PC succeeds, he or she may simply slip away.
- b) If the PC fails, the target may call for the watch, yell "Stop! Thief!" to mobilize any other people present, grab the PC's wrist, or attack the PC. Use the appropriate *maneuvers* and/or *action sequences*.

TRACKING THROUGH WILDERNESS

I Describe the terrain. The type of ground underfoot will determine how easily tracks may be spotted. Use the chart below to assign a difficulty level for the *General maneuver* to spot the tracks.

Routine — mud, soft clay, snow on ground

Easy — soft soil, long (2' or taller) grasses

Light — medium (1' to 2' tall) grasses

Medium — short (6" to 1' tall) grasses

Hard — cover of dead leaves, bushes, undergrowth

Very Hard — bracken- or gorse-covered slope, short & tough grasses or turfs, pine needles

Extremely Hard — loose sand undisturbed by wind or rain, hardened clay

Sheer Folly — wind-blown sand, marshland

Absurd — solid rock, talus slope, shale plain, streambed with stream flowing, flooded area



2 Assign bonuses and penalties based on other factors such as age of the tracks, weather, the skills and abilities of the quarry, the intentions of the quarry, and any tools used by the tracker. Use the chart below as a guide.

tracks less than 1 hour old	+5
tracks 1 to 6 hours old	+3
tracks 7 to 12 hours old	+1
tracks 13 to 24 hours old	+0
tracks 1 to 2 days old	-1
tracks 3 to 7 days old	-3
tracks more than 1 week old	-5
strong wind	-1
rain	-1
snowing	-3
hoofed quarry	+1
clawed quarry	+1
booted quarry	+1
soft-shod quarry	-1
sentient quarry attempting to elude pursuit ..	-3
quarry unworried about pursuit	+0
quarry is a Ranger	-5
bloodhound helping tracker	+3

3 When you have determined the difficulty level of the *maneuver* and assigned bonuses and penalties (do not tell the players the origins of all the bonuses and penalties, since they may not know some of that information), instruct the player of the tracker to *roll the dice*. If the PC succeeds in the *maneuver*, he or she spots the tracks. Otherwise, the tracks remain unnoticed.

4 If the PC spots the tracks, he or she may attempt to discern what or who made them, how old they are, whether the quarry is aware of pursuit, and toward what objective the quarry is moving. The specifics of the adventure will determine the difficulty levels of the *General maneuvers* to discern this information.

Of course, the PCs may already know this information, if they were searching for the tracks of a known quarry.

5 As the PCs follow the tracks, the changing terrain and the further passing of time will require additional *General maneuvers* to find traces of the quarry. Have the players continue to make *dice rolls* as appropriate, until they catch up with the quarry or abandon the pursuit for some other reason.

FOLLOWING QUARRY

1 When the PCs decide to follow a person or a creature, they should try to find some distinguishing characteristic about their quarry. This will enable them to be sure of following the correct individual.

2 Describe the surroundings. Bustling city streets may be one of the most difficult environments for following someone, but a skilled woodsman in the outdoors would make an equally challenging quarry.

3 Are the PCs trying to remain unnoticed by their prey? If so, assign a difficulty level to the task and have each following PC make a *Subterfuge maneuver*.

4 Does the followed individual notice the followers? Assign a difficulty level (the PC's success or failure in the *Subterfuge maneuver* in stage 3 will affect this) and have the NPC make a *Perception maneuver*.

If the NPC notices the following PCs, the quarry may:

- 1) Ignore them. In this case, the quarry will behave just as though he or she has not noticed the PCs.
- 2) Run away. If the PCs give chase, use (with roles reversed) the **FLEEING AN ENEMY** action sequence.
- 3) Hide. Assign a difficulty level to the NPC's attempt to duck into an alley or dodge behind a tree (or whatever action seems most logical in the situation). *Roll the dice* for his or her maneuver. If successful, the PCs lose sight of their quarry.
- 4) Get lost in the crowd. Assign a difficulty level to this *Subterfuge maneuver* and *roll the dice* for the NPC. If successful, the PCs lose sight of their quarry.

If the quarry does not notice the PCs, he or she may:

- 1) Elude the PCs through chance. Evaluate the surroundings and determine if this is possible. For example, a crowded market square, the dim corridors of a labyrinthine monastery, or too large a following distance are all factors which would make it possible for the PCs to lose their quarry. Assign a chance to the possibility (e.g., 1 time out of six — or on a roll of a 1 on a D6), and *roll the dice*.
- 2) Proceed so as to be easily followed. The PCs may follow their quarry until the relevant circumstances change.

5 For as long as the PCs follow their quarry, make periodic checks to determine if the quarry notices the PCs. Use the options presented in stage 4 to determine what happens.



MAKING A DISTRACTION

1 Describe the surroundings. Is there anything present that the PCs might use as part of their distraction (such as a cart full of hay)? Or must they rely on themselves and the contents of their packs?

2 Encourage the players to plan the distraction. The list below includes some obvious factors to be considered along with suggested *experience points* earned by the PC who brings it up for the first time.

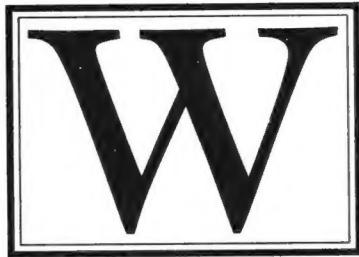
- How will the PCs making the distraction coordinate with the PC who will be operating under the cover of the distraction. (*Experience Points: 8*)
- Who must be distracted by the PCs? What sort of events are most likely to distract the appropriate NPCs? (*Experience Points: 10*)
- How long must the distraction last? Are there ways of adjusting the duration after it's been started? (*Experience Points: 6*)
- Should the distraction include noise or visual disturbance or both? Must it be quiet, so as to distract one person while remaining unnoticed by other persons? (*Experience Points: 7*)
- Must the PCs be ready to flee when the distraction is over? (*Experience Points: 3*)

3 Determine the maneuvers necessary for the execution of the PCs' plan and assign difficulty levels.

4 Allow the PCs to revise their plan based on the information about difficulty levels.

5 When they are ready to proceed with their plan, have each player *roll the dice* for the maneuvers to be performed by his or her PC.

6 Describe what happens as the plan unfolds.



ow! Can we do it again?" exclaimed Stuart, eyes shining. "Michael, Gláin was awesome! I couldn't believe it when you brought down that Troll just has it aimed a blow that would have crushed Lily's skull in! What a maneuver!"

"You were pretty cool yourself, dude," replied Michael. "Nobody but Tolman could have pulled off the scam with the treasure chest. Who else would have thought to turn the front to the wall while using a shoe-string periscope to pick it from behind, so the darts sprayed harmlessly into stone."

Stuart grinned. He had been awfully clever.

"We don't have to stop now," put in Barnabas. "It's only four on a rainy Saturday afternoon, and there's no reason we can't start the next adventure 'Darker Than The Darkness.' We could break for dinner, then wrap it up in the evening. What do you say?"

• NINE • "THE LAST WORD"

Gandalf, when bidding farewell to Thorin & Co. at the edge of Mirkwood, "could not resist the temptation to have the last word." Nor can we!

Did you have fun with "DAWN COMES EARLY"? What particularly clever insults did the players devise to enrage the Trolls? Did Gláin escape certain death by an awesome blow to Lawrie's stony skull? (Boast a little!) Are you ready to search out Inledair the Blackhearted and beat his conscience clean with a war hammer? Hopefully, your first taste of fantasy role playing has left you eager for more. (We think it's a great hobby.)

Two sequel adventures in the first trilogy of *LOR* stand ready to challenge you. Face a fate worse than death in "DARKER THAN THE DARKNESS," and earn a reward richer than that guarded in the treasures of many Kings. Then, in "BAD MEN, FULL O' THIEVERY," discover a secret hidden for centuries — one that could mean the difference between victory and utter defeat for the Free Peoples in their long struggle against the Dark Lord.

After three adventures full of great deeds and narrow escapes, you'll be ready for something really tough! The second trilogy of *LOR* sweeps you over the Misty Mountains to the darkened forest of Mirkwood where the Necromancer lurks. His minions plan your doom, but that's the least of the perils rushing toward you. We don't want to give away any secrets, so we'll say no more!

LOR is completely compatible with the *Middle-earth Role Playing (MERP)* system. *MERP* simply expands upon the concepts you've already mastered by using the *LOR* guidelines. Once you've played all six of the directed adventures provided by *LOR*, you'll be ready for the more open-ended play supported by *MERP* play aids.

You can continue to use the *LOR* guidelines while playing *MERP* adventures or convert to the *MERP* system. It's entirely up to you! Whatever your choice, we wish you a lifetime of the fun and excitement that comes with role playing in Tolkien's Middle-earth. In the professor's (and Gandalf's) words: "May the wind under your wings bear you where the sun sails and the moon walks" on your journey into the imagination. "Fare well wherever you fare!"

Table of CONTENTS

1 · A FEW BASICS	2	The Sequence of Actions	16
Why Guidelines?	2	Attacks	17
Guidelines vs. Rules	3	Combat Table	17
Rolling the Dice	3		
2 · MANUEVERS & ACTIVITIES	4		
Fixed Chance Maneuvers	4	6 · COMBAT FACTORS	19
GM Moderated Maneuvers	5	Representing the Physical Situation	19
Typical Maneuvers	5	Facing	20
Taking Damage	5	Conflicting Actions	20
Healing	5	Orientation	20
3 · CREATING A CHARACTER	6	Basic Perception	20
Choosing a Character Type	6	Character Communication	20
Stats	6		
Assigned Skill Bonuses	7	7 · GAMEMASTER GUIDELINES	21
Total Bonuses	7	Keeping Track of Time	21
Equipment	9	Experience Points	21
Spells	9	Food and Water	22
Spell Description	10		
4 · CHARACTER RECORDS	11	8 · ACTION SEQUENCES	23
Hobbit Scout	12	Sneaking through Town by Night	24
Elf Scout	12	Getting into Position	24
Human Warrior	12	Breaking and Entering	25
Dwarf Warrior	13	Retreating from a Site	25
Elf Warrior	13	Fleeing an Enemy	25
Human Ranger	13	Combat	25
Half-elf Ranger	14	Sneaking through Countryside	27
Human Bard	14	Scouting the Unknown	27
Elf Bard	14	Ambushing an Enemy	28
5 · COMBAT	15	Escaping from Capture	29
The Combat Actions	15	Picking a Pocket	29
		Tracking through Wilderness	30
		Following Quarry	31
		Making a Distraction	31
		9 · "THE LAST WORD"	32

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